

**COMMITTEE ON APPROPRIATIONS  
SUBCOMMITTEE ON LABOR, HEALTH & HUMAN SERVICES,  
EDUCATION, AND RELATED AGENCIES**

**HEARING ON ALZHEIMER'S DISEASE**

**Tuesday, April 1, 2003  
9:30 A.M. – Senate Hart 216**

**WITNESS LIST**

**Panel I**

**Richard Hodes, Director  
National Institute on Aging**

**Panel II**

**Sheldon Goldberg, President and CEO  
Alzheimer's Association**

**Marilyn A. Albert, Ph.D.  
Director, Division of Cognitive Neuroscience  
Department of Neurology  
Co-Director of the Alzheimer's Disease Center  
Johns Hopkins University School of Medicine  
And  
Chair, Medical and Scientific Advisory Committee  
Alzheimer's Association**

**Panel III**

**Mary Jean and Dwayne Uptegraph  
Dubuque, Iowa**

**Donald Kurtz  
Blue Bell, Pennsylvania**

**Mike Martz, Coach  
St. Louis Rams**

**Terrell Owens  
Wide Receiver, San Francisco 49ers**

TESTIMONY OF TERRELL OWENS  
FREMONT, CALIFORNIA

Presented to the  
SUBCOMMITTEE ON LABOR, HEALTH & HUMAN SERVICES, AND EDUCATION AND  
RELATED AGENCIES  
COMMITTEE ON APPROPRIATIONS  
UNITED STATES SENATE

April 1, 2003

Good morning Senator Specter and Senator Harkin. I am honored to be here.

My name is Terrell Owens. I am here to talk to you about an incredible woman named Alice Black. Alice is my grandmother and she has Alzheimer's disease. While I'm here in Washington, she is in a nursing home in Talladega, Alabama. At this point, she remembers mainly me, her late husband and the woman who is here with me today, Marilyn Heard, her daughter and my mother.

Professionally, I have achieved one of my dreams-I play football in the National Football League. I am a wide receiver for the San Francisco 49ers. In my seven seasons in the NFL, I have caught hundreds of passes, scored many touchdowns, set numerous 49er and NFL records, and been to the Pro Bowl three times. Despite this success, I am basically powerless to help a woman that I love very dearly.

Football has provided me with a certain amount of fame and privilege; however, no amount of fame or privilege can heal my grandmother. While I gladly pay her medical and health care expenses, I cannot change the fact that she has Alzheimer's and continues to suffer.

My grandmother helped mold me into the person I am today. She helped raise me, my brother, and my sisters while my mother worked numerous jobs and sewed clothes on the side. Through the way she lived her life, my grandmother passed many special gifts to me. She was strict when necessary, but always caring and often playful. She taught me to work hard, to be proud of who I am, and to never back down or take a back seat to anyone. Many of her so-called old-fashioned beliefs became the bedrock for my success-self discipline, work ethic, and focus. Moreover, because of my grandmother's and my mother's steadfast convictions, I am never afraid to honestly speak my mind about matters that are important to me. Finally, my grandmother's indomitable spirit (she would often cite Scripture, sing hymns, and make sure that I attended church) created a similar spirit within me that gives me the strength to carry on as she continues to suffer.

One of the real tragedies of Alzheimer's is the isolation it produces. The woman who helped raise me is barely aware of my accomplishments or my position in life. I am proud to be Alice Black's grandson and I simply wish that she was able to celebrate what we have become, where we are going, all the while remembering where we have been.

During 2002, I had the honor of serving as the celebrity team chair for the Alzheimer's Association Northern California & Northern Nevada Memory Walk. I plan to serve again this year as the celebrity chair for the 2003 Memory Walk. Through that experience, I filmed a public service announcement for the Alzheimer's Association and was able to make other contributions to the local Alzheimer's chapter. I know there are millions of others who have suffered with a loved one stricken with Alzheimer's just as my family and I have suffered. I am truly humbled to have been chosen to represent many of those persons here today. I believe I speak for all of us when I ask this Committee to help us help those who cannot help themselves.

I know what it takes to be successful in sports. My success is a direct result of the hard work that I put in during the off-season and off the field during the NFL season. When a game is on the line, I want to be the player my teammates look to make a big play or to score a touchdown for my team.

Unfortunately, I cannot go out and make a big play or score a touchdown that will cure my grandmother and the millions of others who suffer from Alzheimer's. However, I am here today as part of a team that can work together to defeat Alzheimer's. I am asking the Senators on this Committee and President Bush to help me, Coach Martz, and the millions of persons we represent to team with us to defeat Alzheimer's. Together, we can make a difference and defeat this horrible disease once and for all.

There is really only one thing I care about in this world- my family. It has been devastating for me and my family to watch my grandmother slip into the ravages of Alzheimer's. I know that you have many difficult decisions to make and that you must always balance many competing priorities and interests. Part of the reason I decided to appear today in front of this Committee is because of the enormous respect I have for it and the work it does. Thus, I urge you for my grandmother and for all of the other families that have been affected by this terrible disease, to increase funding for Alzheimer's research by \$200 million this year and to keep Congress on track toward the goal of \$1 billion for research.

## TESTIMONY OF MIKE MARTZ

Presented to the  
SUBCOMMITTEE ON LABOR, HEALTH & HUMAN SERVICES, AND EDUCATION AND  
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UNITED STATES SENATE  
April 1, 2003

Good Morning Chairman Specter, Senator Harkin and distinguished members of Congress. I consider it a privilege to be here today. I am Mike Martz, beginning my fourth season as head coach of the St. Louis Rams. I share a common experience with others attending this hearing. I, too, have experienced first-hand the devastating affects of Alzheimer's. I watched my mother suffer from the disease for many years.

As a coach, I firmly believe that an aggressive offense wins football games. As a son who watched his mother suffer, I strongly believe a strong offense by Congress is the only way we are going to beat Alzheimer's, the toughest opponent I have faced. Although life is far more precious than any football game ever played, I am here to give you the same message I give my players – take the ball and run. Together, as a team, we can beat this thing.

Today I would like to take a moment to tell you about my wonderful mother, Betty Martz. She raised my four brothers and me mostly on her own. Ironically, she worked incredibly long hours in healthcare– as the volunteer coordinator at Mesa Vista Hospital in San Diego. She was a terrific woman, very energetic and someone everyone enjoyed meeting. She was incredibly strong, a trait you would expect ANY mother of FIVE boys to possess.

We so looked forward to the day she retired as she would have time to finally relax and enjoy life. She elected to remain in her small, but comfortable home in San Diego with her two little dogs. Two of my brothers lived close and visited her often.

Mom was just 68 years old, and really beginning to enjoy her retirement, when we noticed that she had become forgetful – unusually forgetful. I will always remember that day when her doctor diagnosed her with Alzheimer's. My first thoughts were that this only happens to someone else's mother, not my strong mom who had always been so healthy. After her diagnosis, Mom, the always independent woman, insisted that she stay in her home. She managed for a short time with visits from my brothers, however, she slid downhill quite fast.

Though she had always kept a clean house, now somehow she forgot to do it. She stopped cleaning, and her home was in total disarray. She was still driving, but could not find her way out of the neighborhood. We had to disconnect her car battery to keep her home. She began having difficulty with her medications. She had one of those pillboxes labeled with the days of the week, but at times she would take 3 days worth of pills in one morning.

Eventually, due to Alzheimer's, she was unable to care for her two small dogs. At one point, she had 20 bowls of food set out for them. Those tiny dogs blew up like balloons, but Mom did not notice. Mom, who was as brilliant a person as I have ever known, even began making absurd purchases from door-to-door salesmen.

My brother Fritz was a superstar caregiver to our mother. Often, Mom would call him up to 20 times a day – so many calls for a man running a field crew for the power company. Sometimes she would call him at 3:00 in the morning to tell him about imaginary things that were happening to her. She would ask him to come over to protect her against imaginary demons.

The years of caregiving were a huge drain on my brother – it took him two years to recover from the incredible stress and strain of being her primary caregiver. Fritz was constantly there for her, but this disease nearly killed him – he suffered a heart attack as a result.

After Mom could no longer manage on her own, we had to move her to a long-term care facility. By that point, she was running through all of her savings, and certainly would have gone through everything if cancer had not taken her life. As tragic as this may sound, the cancer seemed so much less harsh for Mom after having watched her fight the hopeless battle with Alzheimer's for so many years. You see, this disease robbed her of her life and her family.

The difficult thing with Alzheimer's is dealing with something over which you have absolutely no control. With many other diseases, there is a glimmer of hope and you maintain the ability to communicate and cope as a family. With Mom, we lost that ability to communicate even on the most simple level. We lost the opportunities to laugh and share memories. We were lucky if she could even put names and faces together. It was almost as if she had returned to being an infant -- at a point in her life when she should have been enjoying retirement and grandchildren she had so looked forward to spoiling. She missed many life events that would have meant the world to her -- seeing her first grandson graduate from college or witnessing the successes of her sons that she worked so hard to raise. My biggest regret is that my mother did not get to see me become a head coach in the NFL or to sit in the stands and cheer when I finally fulfilled a lifelong dream of coaching in the Super Bowl. It would have meant so much to her and to me knowing that her hard work paid off.

Now, I fear for my family and future generations. Imagine being hit with Alzheimer's in the prime of your life. I do not want Alzheimer's disease to cause my family the grief and pain that my brothers and I suffered. One of my biggest fears, though, is not being there for my children and grandchildren. After the experience with my mother's battle with Alzheimer's disease, I cannot imagine how I could handle anyone else in my family being diagnosed with this dreadful disease.

Before my mother was affected, I did not understand this disease. I am here to tell you that both the financial impact and the emotional impact are devastating for the patients and their families. I surely was not prepared for the emotional impact – watching my own mother lose her mind and her dignity. As of now, there is no hope for patients or their families. Ladies and gentlemen, it is so important; we MUST find a way to stop Alzheimer's. My understanding is that researchers are close to the answers. Additionally, we must discover a way to help the people who have this disease now and cannot afford the care and treatment they need.

In St. Louis, we have found that a high powered offense wins football games. Now is the time for Congress to line up on the offensive against Alzheimer's disease. As you know, successful strategy for winning games is in a playbook. The Alzheimer's Association has provided you a real life playbook, "A Race Against Time: A National Program to Conquer Alzheimer's Disease." You have heard today what needs to be done and how quickly it needs to happen. I am here to ask you to execute the game plan that will defeat Alzheimer's. It is time for Congress to take the offense against Alzheimer's disease.

Thank you for your time and support.